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Claims

1. A method to inhibit alopecia which method comprises delivering p21 to hair follicles of a mammal, said delivering comprising the step of applying topically to skin areas of a mammal having a plurality of hair follicles, an effective amount of a nucleotide sequence encoding the p21 protein.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said nucleotide sequence is operably linked to control sequences to effect its expression.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said nucleotide sequence is contained in a vector.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein said vector is a viral vector.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said p21 is contained in a liposomal formulation.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the alopecia is androgenic or is chemotherapy-induced alopecia.

7. The method of claim 3 wherein said vector is contained in a liposomal formulation.

8. A method to observe the expression of p21 in hair follicle cells which method comprises providing said cells with an expression system for a nucleotide sequence encoding p21 fused to a nucleotide sequence that encodes an amino acid sequence which confers fluorescence.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the expression system is contained in a plasmid, a retroviral vector or an adenoviral vector.

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10. The method of claim 9 wherein the plasmid is pEDFP-p21.
11. The method of claim 9 wherein said cells are contained in a histoculture.
12. A histoculture prepared by the method of claim 11.